

Wireless Action

Your health, safety, and privacy are at stake...

November 23, 2016

FCC Filing – WC Docket No. 16-383, Comp. Pol. File No. 1362

To Whom It May Concern:

I am filing this comment on the premise that this proceeding is related to plans of copper retirement by a local telephone service provider, or because it is somehow related to the Public Switched Telephone Network, delivered over copper wires. It is extremely essential that landline service is not decommissioned and that analog, copper landline service remain universally available. Landline telephone service is a public utility provided for the People of the United States of America. Removing a public service would wreak havoc on communities, particularly those that depend exclusively on landlines, including the poor, elderly, disabled, and those who do not want to deal with negative health and functional implications of VoIP and cellular phones. The reality is, whether or not the FCC wants to admit it, there is still no substitute for analog landline service, also known as Plain Old Telephone Service (POTS). Analog landlines will continue to work indefinitely in a power outage. They provide 911 operators with your exact location, and thus are often the difference between life and death in a life-threatening emergency. GPS is no help in a crowded urban area – and if you can't speak, you're a dead man walking. Ensuring everyone has landline access and can call 911 is the priority; not improving wireless GPS location data. The public should also be instructed by local municipalities about the dangers of not having a landline, particularly in an emergency. Instead of improving unnecessary services like Text-911 and trying to improve GPS, emergency services should instead focus on educating the public and working to lower landline 911 costs while raising cell phone 911 taxes. It's the right thing to do. Why should the smart people be punished for the dumb peoples' decisions? We are not here to support the rest of the people. An increasing burden on loyal landline customers is a clear signal that our current privatized telephone network is not in the best interest of the people.

Landline telephones also allow the use of central operator services, like collect calling. Payphones, another critical component of our telephone infrastructure, serve a different purpose from cell phones; they are vital in disasters and emergencies and allow people to connect without garbled voice quality and hazardous health implications. Removing landlines and payphones is not a step forward – it is a step backward! Analog landlines have by far the highest sound quality since they use analog, rather than digital signals. Landlines do not experience call interference or dropped calls, and are extremely secure since they use copper wires, often buried underground. In addition, alarms, fax machines, pacemakers, and other equipment are often only compatible with traditional landline systems. There is a good reason for this – landlines, with 99.999% uptime and reliability, are more reliable than wireless and internet-based solutions, by far. While many today have chosen to embrace the wireless movement, this is not everyone. Not everyone is going to jump on this bandwagon, just because carriers and companies try to coerce them into doing so. Many have no desire to own a cell phone, whether for convenience, social, or health implications. Those who are informed and want to make the best educated choice are choosing to continue using their landlines. In terms of telephone service, it is obvious that landlines/payphones are far superior to VoIP and cellular solutions, which may have more features, but they fail miserably when it comes to a quality solution for what they were originally designed to do. Simply put, removal of the

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highest-quality, most reliable, most robust communications system in an area is not progress – it is moving backwards. It is essential that a company that is the provider of last resort in an area continue providing that essential service for its residents. Please try to understand these concerns and do what you know is morally right – putting people before the profit.

With all due respect,

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